

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY SAODAP - CANDACE COWAN

7/11/73

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TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 135755

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, IR

SUBJECT: PAPAVER BRACTEATUM - RESEARCH CONTRACT

1. THE SPECIAL ACTION OFFICE FOR DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION RECENTLY CONCLUDED A RESEARCH CONTRACT WITH THE WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF ISRAEL PURSUANT TO WHICH THE INSTITUTE IS TO PURCHASE 25 TONS OF PAPAVER BRACTEATUM FROM IRAN, SHIP IT TO ISRAEL, EXTRACT THEBAINE FROM THE PLANT, AND SHIP THE THEBAINE TO THE UNITED STATES. ALTHOUGH THE INSTITUTE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE BRACTEATUM, THE IRANIANS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DISCOVER THAT U.S. FUNDS ARE BEHIND THE PURCHASE.

2. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INSTITUTE HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING
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WITH MR. DAVID ALLIANCE AND THE TARAS COMPANY IN IRAN WHO

CLAIM TO BE STILL AUTHORIZED TO SELL BRACTEATUM. A BRIEF INVESTIGATION WAS MADE OF MR. ALLIANCE AND IT WAS DETERMINED THAT HE WAS A LEGITIMATE BRITISH BUSINESSMAN. THE SPECIAL ACTION OFFICE DECLINED TO PURCHASE BRACTEATUM LAST YEAR FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS, AND THE PURCHASE BEING MADE NOW IS STRICTLY FOR RESEARCH.

3. REQUEST EMBASSY PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING DETERMINATIONS FOR SAODAP:

A. DOES THE TARAS COMPANY STILL EXIST?
B. DOES THE TARAS COMPANY HAVE OFFICIAL AUTHORIZATION TO SELL AND EXPORT BRACTEATUM?

C. DOES TARAS STILL HOLD THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO DISTRIBUTE BRACTEATUM?

D. IS DAVID ALLIANCE STILL AN AUTHORIZED AGENT FOR TARAS?

4. THE EMBASSY SHOULD USE ITS DISCRETION IN INFORMING THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT ABOUT BRACTEATUM PURCHASE FOR THE RESEARCH CONTRACT AND USG'S INTEREST. SOME IRANIANS BELIEVE THAT BRACTEATUM WILL BECOME A PRODUCT OF GREAT FINANCIAL VALUE IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND MAY BE CONSIDERING OR PLANNING CULTIVATION OF LARGE AMOUNTS. THIS PURCHASE IS ONLY A SMALL ONE FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES AND AT THIS TIME IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL EVER PURCHASE LARGE AMOUNTS FOR COMMERCIAL USE; THEREFORE IT WOULD BE UNWISE FOR THE IRANIANS TO READ MORE INTO THE PURCHASE THAN IS THERE AND TO ACCELERATE THEIR CULTIVATION OF BRACTEATUM BASED ONLY ON THIS PURCHASE. ROGERS

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